Draft Resolutions

Indian National Congress.

(SPECIAL SESSION

Calcutta. September, 1920



Draft Resolutions.

I

Mr Tilak

This Congress places on record its sense of deep and profound sorrow at the death of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The stainless purity of his life, his services and sufferings in the cause of his country, his deep devotion to the welfare of the people, his arduous endeavours in the fight for national autonomy—these will enshrine his memory in the grateful *recollections of our people and will be a source of* strength and inspiration to countless generations of our countrymen. At this crisis in the history of the nation the Congress will sorely miss his wise, helpful and courageous leadership, the lofty inspiration of his radiant patriotism and the healing benediction of his counsel in difficulty.

II

Dr Ohdedar

This Congress records its deep sense of grief at the loss sustained by the country in the death of Dr Mahendra Nath Ohdedar, a true patriot, a distinguished servant of the country and a courageous *champion of the cause of the people.*

III

Congress Sub-committee Report

That the thanks of this Congress be conveyed to the members of the Punjab Enquiry Sub-Committee and the Commissioners appointed by *them for the great industry and judicial care with* which they have collected the evidence and written their report, which is supported not only by the evidence recorded by them but also by the evidence given before the Hunter Committee, and expresses its concurrence with the findings of fact arrived at by the said Commissioners.

IV

Majority report of the Hunter Committee

(a) This Congress expresses its deep and bitter disappointment at the draft, tone, tendency and final conclusions of the *majority report of the Hunter* Committee and begs to express its complete and total dissent from the findings and recommendation of the said majority.

(b) This Congress further places on record its deliberate opinion—

(i) That the report submitted by the majority of the Hunter Committee is tainted by bias and race-prejudice, based on insufficient consideration of evidence and *characterized by a too obvious desire* to slur over the proved and manifest iniquities of the Government officials concerned, and to whitewash the conduct of the *Punjab Government* and the Government of India

(ii) That the said report is unacceptable and unreliable in as much as it is based upon evidence which is incomplete, one-sided and biassed by self-interest.

(iii) That the findings arrived at in the majority report are not justified even upon the evidence actually on record, and in any case, their recommendations fall far short of the minimum legitimate requirements of the case.

V

GOVT OF INDIA'S REVIEW

(a) That with reference to the Government of India's review of the two reports of the Hunter Committee, this Congress records its deliberate opinion—

(i) That the said review follows too blindly and slavishly in the lines of the report submitted by the majority of the Hunter Committee, and accepts the findings of the majority without sifting or discrimination;

(ii) that it pays scant and inadequate consideration to the arguments and findings of the minority report—even when such arguments and findings are amply borne out by the evidence on record ;

(iii) that the whole drift and tendency of the said Review is not to arrive at a just and impartial finding on facts but to hush up the whole affair and to throw a veil of oblivion upon the misdeeds of the officials concerned ;

(iv) that the action proposed to be taken in the review with reference to the conduct of guilty officials is grossly and utterly inadequate to the gravity of the state of things disclosed and has shaken all confidence in the fairness of British justice

(b) That, in particular, this Congress enters its emphatic and indignant protest against the view of the Government of India—*viz*, that the conduct of General Dyer at Jallianwallabagh amounted only to

a grave error 'which exceeded the reasonable requirements of the case' and that it was based upon an honest but "mistaken conception of duty

(c) That this Congress further reiterates its opinion that Lord Chelmsford, by his previous complicity in the affairs of the Punjab and his subsequent failure to take adequate steps to punish the guilty, has forfeited the confidence of the people of India and should recalled

VI

MR MONTAGU'S DESPATCH

(a) This Congress expresses its sense of bitter disappointment at Mr Montagu's failure to take adequate action with reference to the atrocities of the Punjab, at his tame acquiescence in the recommendations of the Government of India, and his practical condonation of the misdeeds of the Punjab officials

(b While far from sympathizing with the bulk of Mr Montagu's European critics in the matter of his Punjab policy, this Congress records its deliberate opinion that the said criticism derived colour and justification from the Secretary of State's own conduct, his mealy mouthed condemnation of the Punjab officials the halting and temporizing character of his despatch his approval of the conduct of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and his half hearted condemnation of General Dyer's conduct coupled with the qualifying statement that the general displayed honesty of purpose and unflinching adherence to duty

(c) This Congress is of opinion that inspite of the fine and lofty sentiments expressed in his despatch, Mr Montagu by his failure to take adequate action with reference to the atrocities of the Punjab, has forfeited the confidence of the People of India and would deserve to be dismissed by his Majesty

VII

DEBATE IN THE HOUSE ...

This Congress expresses its sense of bitter wrong and injustice at the character of the debate upon the Indian estimates—*viz* that it should have turned not upon the atrocious wrongs inflicted upon the Punjab but upon the supposed wrong and injustice of the utterly inadequate punishment inflicted upon General Dyer

VIII

RESOL— ... LORDS

(a) This Congress records its indignant protest against the action of the House of Lords in accepting Lord Finlay's motion and is of opinion that the said motion is inaccurate, one-sided and false in spirit and substance



(b) The Congress further places on record considered opinion that the acceptance of Lord Finlay's motion coupled with the spirit and temper of the speeches delivered in connection therewith and the utter disregard which they betray for the rights and liberties of the Indian people have shaken the faith of our countrymen in the justice of the British Parliament and of the English governing classes".

IX

FINDINGS ON THE PUNJAB DISORDERS

Upon consideration of all the material available at its disposal, viz, the report and evidence of the Congress Sub-Committee, the two reports of the Hunter Committee and the evidence tendered before that body, the Review of the Government of India and the despatch of the Secretary of State—upon consideration of all this material, the Congress comes to the deliberate finding—

(1) That there was never any rebellion in the Punjab in April or May last year—nothing but casual rioting provoked in every instance by the unnecessary aggressiveness of the civil and military authorities and such as might have easily been suppressed by the display of ordinary tact and promptness ;

(2) that there was no justification for the introduction of Martial law—specially in view of the fact that the disturbances such as they were had subsided in all the affected areas at the date when such law was introduced

(3) that, in any case, there was no justification for the undue prolongation of Martial law when, according to the admission of the Government itself, there was no disturbance in the Punjab after the third week of April, 1919,

(4) that the administration of Martial law in the areas where it had been proclaimed was defaced by a harshness, cruelty, barbarity and malicious delight in the infliction of unnecessary humiliation such as constitutes a shame upon humanity and civilization ;

(5) that the massacre at Jallianwallabagh was one unmitigated horror—begun without cause, continued with wanton cruelty and followed by a callous and brutal neglect of the dead and the dying

X

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS.

This Congress places on record its firm and deliberate opinion that there will be no peace and

contentment in the country, and the Government will have no moral right to demand the loyal co-operation of the people

(1) Unless the Rowlatt Act is repealed ;

(2) and unless the claims of justice are vindicated by the recall of the Viceroy, and the adequate punishment of Sir Michael O Dwyer, General Dyer Col Frank Johnson Col O Brien, Mr Bosworth Smith Rai Sahib Sriram Sud, Malik Sahib Khan and the other malefactors concerned in the Punjab iniquities of the last year

XI

KHILAFAT

The Congress is emphatically of opinion that the Peace terms offered to Turkey constitute a flagrant violation of the solemn pledges of His Majesty's Government and are in complete disregard of the principle of National Self Determination accepted by the Allied powers and of the Muslim religious sentiment in India Having regard to the fact that the resources of India were freely used during the War in Asia the Congress deplores that their employment should have eventuated under the terms of the said Treaty in the virtual destruction of the power and prestige of the Khalifat and the removal of the Holy Places of Islam from the custody and control of the Khalifa and their being placed under Christian influence or control

The Congress strongly urges that, in the interest of peace and contentment in Indian, the terms of the Turkish Treaty should be revised to bring them into conformity with the said pledges and the just sentiments of Indian Mussulmans

XII

NON-CO-OPERATION

(a) That considering

(i) the utterly disappointing and unsatisfactory character of the Montagu Chelmsford reforms

(ii) the indecent haste and callous disregard of public opinion with which the Rowlatt Act was hurried last year through the Imperial Legislative Council ,

(iii) the indiscriminate use of the Defence of India Act and Regulation III of 1818 showing utter contempt of the rights and liberties of the people

(iv) the manner and circumstances in which Martial law was proclaimed and administered last year in the Punjab ;

(v) the spirit which animates the Majority report of the Hunter Committee and the

drift and tendency of the Government of India's Resolution and the Secretary of State's despatch in connection with the same;

(vi) the failure of Parliament to redress the outrages perpetrated by the Civil and Military authorities in the Punjab, the character of the debates in both the Houses, and the resolution of the House of Lords on the Dyer case,

(vii) the deliberate disregard for the religious sentiments of the Mahomedan community which the Cabinet had displayed in framing the Turkish treaty,

And owing to the failure of all other methods of political agitation in India to secure the rights of the people against Executive autocracy this Committee records its opinion that non-co-operation is the only effective weapon left to them

(b) That as a first step in the carrying out of this principle of non-co-operation the Congress urges the immediate abandonment of titles and honorary offices on the part of all members of Congress-organizations, and non participation in Government loans.

(c) That as means for the further successful carrying out of the policy of non-co-operation this Congress urges the establishment of arbitration courts, foundation of national schools and the starting and development of all manner of indigenous industries —so that the people by learning to do without Government institutions and products of foreign manufacture, may be gradually trained in the lesson and practice of non co-operation

(d) That meanwhile, and pending the introduction of non-co-operation on the largest and fullest possible scale, the Congress urges that a vigorous propaganda should be carried on all over the country, making people familiar with the principle of non-co-operation teaching them its efficacy as the only available constitutional remedy left at our disposal, and so training them up that they may be able to practice non-co-operation without feeling tempted to have recourse to measures of violence

(e) That, however, the Congress will urge the adoption of the full programme of non-co-operation, if the Government are so ill-advised as to launch upon measures of repression against the practitioners of non-co-operation

(f) That considering the circumstances of the country and considering the fact that participation in elections will give the masses of our people some much-needed political training, this Congress does not, as yet, advocate the boycott of the reformed councils

XIII

That this Congress records its emphatic protest against the wholesale exclusion of the Congress party from the advisory committees formed by the government for drafting the rules and regulations under the Reforms Act

[illegible] Committee

XIV.

That this Congress regrets that the Joint Parliamentary Committee refused a public hearing to the Hon'ble Mr V J Patel and did not give him any opportunity to place before them the views of the National Congress upon the rules and regulations framed under the Reforms Act

Refusal of hearing to Mr Patel

XV

That this Congress expresses its dissatisfaction with the retrograde and reactionary character of the rules framed under the Reforms Act and is of opinion that the said rules are specially open to criticism in the following particulars

Reforms Rules

(a) the excessive representation granted to the European and Anglo-Indian communities

(b) withholding of the elective franchise from the organized labouring classes of the Presidency towns and other important industrial centres

(c) not fixing a minimum educational test as a qualification of franchise

(d) restricting the University franchise only to graduates of seven years standing

(e) pushing the principle of communal representation to extreme and unnecessary lengths

XVI

That this Congress regrets that restricted effect has been given to the Royal Proclamation of mercy so that various persons condemned to jail or exile after conviction for political offence or detained as state-prisoners under Regulation III of 1818 should still be rotting in durance in spite of the gracious message of the King Emperor

Restricted effect of Royal Proclamation

XVII

That this Congress deplores that a narrow and technical difference should have been made between amnesty and pardon and that, under the colour of this illiberal interpretation the Punjab leaders should

be deprived of the opportunity of standing for the council elections; and the Congress emphatically urges that this grievance should be remedied and the Royal Proclamation should be interpreted according *to the spirit* and not according to the strict letter of the law.

XVIII

This Congress is of opinion that the Governors of provinces should have been selected from among men having experience of English public life and trained in habits of Parliamentary discipline and that a *wrong and unfair start* has been given to the Reform scheme by selecting *four* out of the five new Governors from the ranks of the I C. S

XIX.

(a) This Congress notes with pleasure that *the English Government have seen their way to recognise* the justice of restoring to the Egyptian people some portion of their national independence and urges that the Principle of national autonomy should be applied in the case of India also

(b) This Congress congratulates the Egyptian people on their *successful fight for freedom and the restoration of a certain measure of their independence* and hopes that this restoration will soon be full and unqualified.

XX.

RATONA SLAUGHTER-HOUSE AND COW-PROTECTION

(a) This Congress protests *emphatically against the Government affording* help in the shape of grant of land or otherwise to the project *of erecting* a slaughter-house at Ratona (C P), where the monstrous proposal is made of slaughtering at least two lacs of animals every year

(b) Considering that the *slaughter of cows, bulls* and calves is a grievous and intolerable outrage upon the religious sentiments of the Hindus, and considering further that it constitutes a huge drain upon the economic resources of the country, this Congress urges that Government should take *immediate steps to stop* such slaughter by means of necessary legislation—provided always that such legislation makes due provision for safeguarding the religious sentiments of the Mahommedan or any other community.

XXI

That this Congress recommends that the first article of the Congress Constitution be changed so as to read as follows — CREED

That the object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of complete national government by the pursuit of peaceful and constitutional methods

XXII

This Congress demands that in all Colonies and Protectorates within the British commonwealth the principle of the equal status of Indians with all other subjects of the King Emperor be recognised by the Colonial Office and by the local colonial and protectorate administrations and that in all self governing dominions the same principle be accepted by the different dominion governments on the understanding that reciprocal action in India will follow its refusal — INDIANS IN COLONIES AND DOMINIONS

XXIII

(a) That Lord Milners proposals with regard to franchise land purchase and race segregation for Indians in East Africa are incompatible with equal status and constitute a grievous wrong upon the Indian settlers — EAST AFRICA

(b) That the principle of a property and literary test incumbent on all races be recommended as a solution of the difficulties concerning franchise

(c) That complete freedom of land purchase both in the low land and up land areas of East Africa can alone satisfy Indian legitimate claims

(d) That the segregation of Indians in separate town locations in East Africa is unnecessary undesirable and unjust

XXIV

(a) That any administration of the South African Indian Relief Act of 1914 for political ends, which may involve pressure bribery or compulsion in order to induce repatriation be condemned — SOUTH AFRICA

(b) That this Congress protests against the colour bar in the South African Union Assembly which prevents any Indian from holding a seat

XXV

(a) That the Fiji Government's proposal to allot two seats by election to Indians on the Fiji Legislative Councils is inadequate — FIJI

(b) That in the light of recent events in Fiji including the deportation of Mr. and Mrs Manilal and others, and in view of the dissatisfaction of Indians on the spot with local conditions, the resumption of labour recruiting in India for Fiji is not advisable

(c) That no action be taken with regard to the renewal of labour immigration from India to other Crown Colonies such as Demerara and Surinam, without full popular consent both of the Indian people as a whole and of the province which might be required to supply such labour

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